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ABSTRACT

In focusing on local school board response to citizen desires for change in public school operations and on significant issues changing education from the perspective of school boards, three principles must be kept in mind: (1) public schools are controlled by three arms of government at three levels; (2) the federal government has limited powers; and (3) federal trends (concerning the federal government) are not coincidental with national trends (existing independently of the federal government). Issues of federal and national scope include severe student population decline, fewer students but richer programs, and expansion of federal control. States have reacted by emphasizing their power at the expense of local boards of education who are bypassed at the local level in favor of citizen advisory committees. School board concerns involve a trend against big government spending, administrative unionism, curriculum reform, vocational career education programs, and their role as coordinators of community educational resources in a more comprehensive approach to education. Parent and citizen involvement necessary to help school boards deal with these problems raises other problems: advisory committees versus school boards as final authority, support of the expanding group of senior citizens, and the relationship among the superintendent and advisory committee and school board. (YLB)

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Occasional Paper No. 58

THE ROLE OF LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND DIRECTION OF PROGRAMS OF OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

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PREFACE

We are indebted to Thomas A. Shannon, executive director of the National School Boards Association, for his timely and provocative comments on local school board involvement in the current issues of vocational education and school governance.

In his remarks, Mr. Shannon outlined some of the political and economic issues facing schools today. He spoke in great detail about the lines of authority among the federal, state, and local sectors, the issue of accountability, and the proper role of citizen advisory committees. Drawing from his extensive legal background, Mr. Shannon outlined many of the legislative and judicial issues involved in education today. He speculated on the directions education, particularly vocational education, will take in light of certain court decisions and interpretations of the law.

Mr. Shannon holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Minnesota Law School. Active in education, legal, and civic affairs, Mr. Shannon was an adjunct professor of law and education at the University of San Diego and a member of the university's Educational Administration Advisory Committee in the School of Education. He has served as schools' attorney for the San Diego City Schools and Community Colleges, as a legal advisor to the American Association of School Administrators, and as a professor of AASA's National Academy of School Executives. He holds a life credential to administer public schools in California and memberships in numerous professional organizations in the areas of law and education. Mr. Shannon assumed his present position as executive director of the National School Boards Association in 1977.

On behalf of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education and The Ohio State University, I take great pride and pleasure in presenting Mr. Shannon's speech entitled, "The Role of Local School Boards in the Development and Direction of Programs of Occupational Education."

Robert E. Taylor
Executive Director
The National Center for Research
in Vocational Education

THE ROLE OF LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND DIRECTION OF PROGRAMS OF OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

My remarks today will focus on the manner in which local school boards can and do respond to citizen desires for change in public school operations and on some of the more significant issues which are bringing about change in American education from the perspective of school boards. Before we look at these twin topics, however, there are three bedrock principles that we must keep in mind.

First of all, public school governance is representative government in its purest form. Indeed, when one talks about control of the public schools, the subject really is representative government. We teach in our schools that the United States has a tripartite check and balance system with three separate and coequal branches: the executive, legislative, and judicial. Each is a check upon the other toward the end that no one branch or any dominant person within a branch can assume too much power. This concept of government, as we know, has been adopted by the states. The public schools, as both creatures and arms of the state at the local level, are subject to some measure of control by all three branches of the federal and state governments. This control is technically not a check and balance, because the concept of check and balance is relevant only when the branches of government are coequal. Obviously, the local public school board is not equal to the parent state and federal governments; but school boards would be roughly classified as part of the executive branch. So as far as the check and balance concept is concerned, school boards are fair game for the legislature and the judiciary. (By the legislature, I mean both the state legislature and the Congress; and I'm referring to both the federal and state judiciary.) School boards must also hearken to regulations of the executive branch of the state government and, indeed, the executive branch of the federal government in their acceptance of federal funds and the conditions for receipt of those funds.

The second bedrock concept is that, under the United States Constitution, the federal government is one of limited powers. All powers that are not enumerated in the Constitution are reserved for the states. Education is such a power, but that does not mean that the federal government is powerless to do something in education. In fact, the federal government has the authority, through constitutional interpretation by the United States Supreme Court, to appropriate and spend money for the common good and the general welfare of the people of America. While it's true that the federal government can't do anything in education as such, it does have the authority and the power to appropriate and spend money for the public good; and the courts have interpreted that to mean the federal government can spend money in the area of education.

This raises the issue which in my opinion is going to be the lawsuit of the decade; that is, when do the conditions imposed by the federal government—as conditions for receiving money grants—equal coercion? In other words, when does the perfectly legitimate and legal persuasion tactic become coercion? We've got several lawsuits pending on this issue now. For example, the National Institute of Municipal Law Officers and the National School Boards Association filed a brief in the United States Supreme Court challenging the whole question of unemployment

insurance for government employees on the basis that it imposes a substantial money burden on an arm of local government. You remember the case that was decided by the United States Supreme Court just a year or so ago which held that the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act controlling payment for overtime work could not be legitimately applied to state and local government because it's an incursion into this whole area of states' rights. That lawsuit overturned a previous lawsuit decided in 1967. The matter of unemployment insurance really is not an educational issue per se, but I think a federal collective bargaining bill, for example, could very well be.

The third bedrock principle is that we have to differentiate carefully between federal trends and national trends. A federal trend concerns the federal government; a national trend exists independently of the federal government. Certain demographic problems that all of you are aware of—the decline of the birth rate, the decline in the student population—clearly are national problems and have nothing to do with the relationship of educational institutions and the federal government. On the other hand, the tuition tax credits proposal is clearly a federal issue, because that has to do with relationships within the federal government (that is, the Congress and the U.S. Office of Education or whoever would administer the act), the Treasury Department, and public education in general. With those three bedrock concepts in mind, let's take a look at some of the issues of both the federal and the national scope.

First of all, we're in a time of severe student population decline, and that poses some real problems in governance. The first problem is the budget impact. This is reflected, I think, in the enormous pressures we're seeing to close the schools. This is a very serious political issue that could tear apart communities. For the most part, state finance laws that fund the schools are based on per-pupil population. As soon as student population slides off, people start thinking about closing schools. But unfortunately, student population doesn't slide off uniformly—you get a few seats empty here, a few seats empty there, and a few seats empty in various parts of the city. When income begins to fall off, squabbling about the reduction of programs begins. That's a problem that school boards are wrestling with constantly.

One of the other problems is what I call the contraction contradiction. By that I mean there are fewer youngsters, but often richer programs. Teacher associations often push this in their campaign for lower class size which, incidentally, also permits continued growth of the profession despite a declining enrollment. However, there's more accountability than ever before. The educational programs are accountable because there's more competition for the dollars among the various local governmental entities. This is a product of inflation, a general cry for tax relief, and a demand for more government services generally. We're at a point now in the Proposition 13 syndrome where school boards, city councils, county boards and supervisors, and other municipal and governmental officers at the local government level are actually confronting each other, trying to get a bigger piece of that local government pie. The happy days where everybody was cooperating seem to be on the wane. The contraction phenomenon means that everything gets hotter; that is, decisions of where to cut in a retrenchment process are far more difficult and controversial than decisions of where to expand in a growth situation. That's significant from the standpoint of both the government and the school administration and calls for a lot of citizen input.

We're also in a governance crisis. At the federal level, we have a continuing attempt to expand federal control through the enactment of categorical programs by the Congress and the promulgation of regulations, interpretations, and guidelines by the executive branch. All of this is perceived, of course, by Congressmen as being in the national interest and in accordance with federal priorities. We have the problem of the establishment of alternative educational programs by virtue of federal act. We're finding that these alternative educational systems really are separate educational systems that work away from the mainstream of American education by putting the federal Department of

Labor into the education business and totally ignoring what the education community thinks is the legitimate interest of American education, generally. The CETA program is a good example, but there are a number of proposals which would do this. We're constantly on the alert in Washington for this sort of thing so that we can work effectively *with* the Congress to keep American education where it belongs, in the educational mainstream throughout America.

At the state level, we are seeing the by-product of federal categorical programs in the emphasis on state boards of education and state superintendents at the expense of local boards of education. By dealing directly with local superintendents, state superintendents effectively short-circuit local school board effectiveness, and I think this does serious injury to representative governance in public education. And when does a state office become a federal office? Many of our state superintendents are operating anywhere from 25 to 75 percent of their total budgets on federal funds. When do state departments of education become adjuncts to the federal government, and when do they truly advocate state interests at the state level, rather than apologize for or mouth the line of the federal government?

At the local level, we are seeing attempts by the state legislatures and the federal government to get school governance back to what the Congressmen and many of the educational bureaucrats in Washington call the "grassroots." This invariably bypasses local school boards in favor of non-elected, non-responsible advisory committees composed of citizens who exercise authority but have no real responsibility and don't really represent anybody in the elected sense. These advisory committees, which are selected outside the framework of local government, are required by federal law. However, many have power to approve something independently of the school board or to veto things that the school board has done. In a sense, these advisory board requirements are a repudiation of local government, and this is, in my judgment, completely unjustified and indefensible. All of us know what's happening. The push towards egalitarianism is having the effect of moving decision-making even further away from the local community, making the state the principal distributor of funds, and (for all practical purposes) making the local collection of taxes and disbursement of taxes within the area a thing of the past.

Of course, the push by the private and the parochial schools for public funding is another very important trend reflected in the relative success so far enjoyed by the tuition tax credit bill, whose chances of success in Congress are not unreasonable during this election year. The National School Boards Association is opposed to this on a number of grounds, but this matter is now pushing itself through Congress.

We are seeing another trend reflected in the Proposition 13 syndrome—a trend against big spending in government. The polls indicate that by voting for Proposition 13, Californians thought they were somehow going to lessen their welfare costs and what they saw as the other evils of modern public finance. It was an anti-tax, anti-government message, but I think it's important to point out that it was not an anti-school message. It came to the fore as it did primarily because of a lack of leadership on the part of the governor and the state legislature in California. The government had an enormous money surplus; it sat on this money like a big fat hen on the golden egg and didn't disburse it. People saw their property tax bills rising astronomically while at the same time this huge surplus was sitting in Sacramento, and they decided to do something about it. They went to the election booths, and they did. California has been able to keep its head above water in the education area primarily because of this large surplus which provided funding up to about 10 percent of what was funded the previous year in California schools. It was a tough governance decision, but for the most part they got by with just closing the summer schools. Of course, there are no salary increases anymore. They passed an interesting law in California that says that no local government unit, including school districts, may receive a salary increase in excess of the salary increase granted

generally to state employees across the board. By using this law, the state employees hoped to bring the enormous power of local government to bear on their salary setting efforts. But the governor vetoed the proposed 2.5 percent increase for state employees, which left them with a net salary increase of zero. This meant that local government employees also received a zero salary increase, much to the delight of Mr. Jarvis and his Proposition 13 supporters.

Administrative unionism is another issue that, from the school board perspective, we are very concerned about. Transformation of local and state administrator associations from professional to union-oriented organizations is a matter of considerable concern to school boards. The Taft-Hartley (National Labor Relations) Act, which controls the private sector, makes a very clear differentiation between who is management and who is labor. Managers have no rights as such. This is not so with the various pieces of legislation that govern collective negotiations with school employees in the public sector. There is very little differentiation between management and labor. In some states such as Tennessee, for example, which just passed that kind of a law and is now in the process of implementing it, principals and other high-level administrators are lumped in with teachers. According to interpretation in some states, principals and even high-level central office personnel are not considered management. This is something that the NSBA is very concerned with.

Incidentally, we are working through a joint committee with the American Association of School Administrators on this whole administrative team concept. The literature on administrative teams is replete with the vaguest kinds of phrases, fuzzy roles, and fuzzy relationships. It's really a bag of feathers. The National School Boards Association and the American Association of School Administrators have tried to clarify the administrative team concept so that we will be able to use it as the basis for some practical action. We're working very closely with the American Association of School Administrators on items that concern school principals and superintendents who, with middle- and higher-level administrators, are responsible for the implementation of school board and other educational policy in their districts. We're working on the whole issue of employment contracts. What kind of employment contract is fair for a superintendent and for his or her management groups? What kind of compensation should these people receive? NSBA is working with AASA and a private firm to do a survey throughout the United States on administrative salary levels. Eventually we hope to develop some guidelines which will help districts set administrative salary levels. In the old days, administrators' salaries used to be hooked onto the teachers' salary levels. Now that we have administrators negotiating with the teachers on salary, they have a fundamental conflict of interest. The higher the teachers' salary schedule goes, the higher theirs goes. So we have to develop an alternative strategy for the setting of administrative salaries.

How much due process is due superintendents and administrators? Administrators and superintendents are expected to be courageous in their decision-making, but to what extent does such courage lead to public outcry? Oftentimes instead of a bad school board policy being the victim, the superintendent, the principal, and others who are trying in a good faith effort to implement the policy are the victims. If that occurs, what kind of fair procedures does the board extend to those trusted confidants, their administrators? What kind of due process should be extended to them? This is a matter that concerns NSBA and AASA and it's one of those subjects that we're working on. We hope to have some model statements out on this before the year is out.

Of course the relationship between public school employers and employees generally is in the process of changing. We have seen a great deal of growth in private sector collective bargaining in public education, and the possibility of federal legislation in this area cannot be dismissed. The question is, what is more fundamental to a state than the governance of its relationship between the elected political leaders and the employees of the state? You remember what the two approaches are. The first is the American Federation of Teachers approach, which would amend the Taft-Hartley bill

by deleting certain pertinent exceptions. This would have the effect of placing teachers under the provisions of the National Labor Relations Board. NEA and a coalition of other municipal employees' unions would amend it a different way. They would set up a special Public Relations Negotiations Board which would have the same powers for public employees as the National Labor Relations Board has for other employees. One of the problems in that, it seems to me, is the real threat of takeover by public employees. As a matter of fact, it would make public employees an elite group of citizens for all practical purposes. They would have the collective bargaining privilege as well as the privilege the rest of the citizens enjoy, the power of the ballot box. The scope of negotiations in those bills is extremely broad.

Of course there is the whole question of curriculum reform, headed up by the "back-to-basics" movement. This affects not only the educational program, but also includes the moral, spiritual, and ethical aspects of school training. What is the role of the public school in the moral, spiritual, and ethical training of the non-sectarian youngster? This is a problem we'll be facing, especially as the breakdown of home authority continues and as more remedial kinds of citizenship programs are developed to fill that void. Then, of course, we've got the nationwide testing program. Fortunately, government leaders at the national level (the director of NIE, the Commissioner of Education, and the secretary of HEW) take the position that there should not be a nationwide testing program nor should there be a nationwide curriculum. The belief is that one will lead to the other, that if you establish a nationwide test, in effect you establish a nationwide curriculum. Of course, there is also a renewed look at the vocational career education program, especially as it relates school to work. I can say this speaking for NSBA, that school board members are generally very supportive of career education/vocational education programs. There are many things we could be doing together that we haven't done in the past, and my hope is that in the future there will be even greater cooperation between NSBA and the National Center.

We're a litigious nation; and while the judiciary is a legitimate sector of our tripartite form of national and state government, it will continue to grow to enforce expanded constitutional rights, interpretations of new social legislation in accord with the intent of the Congress, and the interpretations and guidelines which are issued by bureaucrats at the state and national levels. I'm a lawyer, so I'm probably a little defensive about this, but I take the position that the courts are taking a "bum rap" on public education. The court's classical function is to interpret the Constitution and to interpret the intent of the Congress and the state legislatures in laws that both legislative bodies enact. However, when the court rules against a particular individual or a particular school board, the attention is generally focused on the court rather than on a bad law. In fact, it's the legislature that wrote the law. The legislature has a perfect right to amend the law to reflect a ruling different from the one the court decided upon if it so chooses. But too often it's judges, rather than the legislature, who have to carry the burden in areas other than constitutional law. That's the nature of our whole system of government. For that to change would be to effect a fundamental change in our system of government in the United States.

I think we're heading toward a more comprehensive approach to educating the young. The almost exclusive emphasis on the schools as the place for young people to learn will be shifted to include more of society's educational instrumentalities such as television, libraries, museums, on-the-job training, and so on. In my judgment, and in the judgment of many people who follow the problems of education throughout the United States, we have been too lax in this aspect. We should have long ago used the resources of the community to a much greater extent. We have let a rich resource go untapped. If approached properly, the influence of education could be dramatically expanded. School board members would become not just governors of education, but coordinators of all the educational resources of the community.

And of course we've got the question of whether or not the United States government should have a separate, cabinet-level Department of Education. This is an area, like all of education, where reasonable opinions may differ. There are people who believe that a separate Department of Education will tend to increase federal control of education. The National School Boards Association does not view it that way. For several years NSBA has been in favor of a separate Department of Education to replace what we consider the absolutely unmanageable, unmonitorable, and unaccountable system we have now. We have at present a half-dozen governmental agencies passing regulations that impact very profoundly on public school operations. The Office of Civil Rights is just one example. There is no liaison within either the educational community or the governmental community which can put these all in one. The National School Boards Association feels that a cabinet-level Department of Education would be a help, not to focus the attention of the local communities on Washington, but to focus the attention of Washington on the local communities where we believe the governance of public education should continue.

Of course we have many, many allied or peripheral kinds of issues the school boards are dealing with in one form or another, including the disintegration of the family unit in our society and the new role of women leading to an expansion and diversification of the work force. This was unheard of even a decade ago. Our continuing inflation problem is having a profound effect on our tax system. We are monitoring this problem very carefully. The tax system must reflect the economic reality in the society that operates. If there is no creativity, no leadership on either the part of the governor or the part of the legislature, it is up to the people on the local level to apply the appropriate pressure to make sure that they do their jobs. The energy crunch is going to have profound implications, I think, for public school governance in years to come. Of course, we are seeing efforts by a multiplicity of groups within our society to better their positions and secure more favorable treatment for themselves. Our society is fragmenting into a whole series of special interest groups. This definitely has a real impact in Washington.

In dealing with these and other issues, which I'm sure you perceive very well, school boards, school administrators, and teachers need all the help they can get. That's why school boards are committed to extensive involvement with parents and other citizens in formulating educational policy. School board members look upon themselves as trustees, as leaders in education from the lay governance standpoint. But school board members insist that this help must be set within the framework of representative government. The policies, beliefs, and resolutions adopted by the delegate assembly of the National School Boards Association clearly endorse citizen involvement in all levels of the public school system. One of the long-term policies and beliefs of the National School Boards Association is reflected in the following policy resolution:

> School boards encourage citizen participation that increases the public's communication and identification with its schools. To this end, school boards should develop policies that support the concept of citizen advisory bodies and establish clear guidelines that define the task, composition, operation, duration, reporting, and evaluation of such bodies.

The resolution goes on to call for more parental involvement, and even student involvement, in the development of educational policies in schools throughout the United States.

As wholesome as citizen involvement is in the success of the public schools, there are some problems, and they're serious ones. These problems concern concepts or notions about what representative government is. It is the position of the National School Boards Association that final decision-making authority must continue to rest with the elected school board. In our nation, 95 percent of the school boards are elected directly by the people. The other 5 percent, primarily

in the southern states, are appointed by elected officials. But the point is that the school boards are the representatives, either directly or indirectly, of the people. It's as simple as that. To have advisory committees that do more than advise is quite another thing, and that's the basis for our whole opposition to those provisions in federal law that would set up advisory committees of citizens to advise the local school boards on the expenditure of federal funds. I think this is a primary problem that school boards have with Congress. Some members of Congress insist on going back to what they perceive as the "grassroots," as I mentioned before, and actually giving these advisory groups veto power. But you must keep in mind that school board members *do* want citizen involvement because, among other advantages, it brings peripheral dividends. Poll after poll shows that the people that support the public schools—people who believe the public schools are doing a good job—are the people who know what's going on in the public schools. They are invariably the parents who are active leaders in citizen group involvement. The people who say the public schools aren't doing a good job are invariably the ones who don't know anything about their schools, and that's another one of the real issues that's facing the United States in public education today.

If you take a look at the current demographic studies, you see a decline in the birthrate, which means fewer youngsters going to school and fewer parents to support the activities and the projects of the public schools. But you also see, up in the top end, that many people are living much longer than they ever have before in our society. That means they're voting longer than they ever have before. Making that whole expanding senior citizen group supporters of the public schools is a crucial governance issue. We need to bring the elderly back into the schools, not necessarily as students, but as participants in community centers featuring activities for elderly people based in the schools. If we can get these people into the schools, they can see what the situation is and then judge it for themselves on the basis of first-hand experience—not on the basis of scattered news accounts of problems in the public schools.

Many citizen groups do not see themselves or their role as truly advisory in nature, but as dictatorial. They feel that if they give advice, the school board must take it, and this is totally incompatible with the whole idea of an advisory committee. A very important thing in an administrative/board relationship is that the superintendent must be permitted the time and opportunity to comment upon or make recommendations upon the report of the school board's advisory committee. The school board has an obligation, indeed a real *duty,* to listen to the superintendent. This is especially true in areas where a political decision does not support an educational decision. Sometimes you have a political decision that's absolutely untenable from the educational standpoint. The board has to know that. The board has to make it clear that the superintendent has an obligation to tell them where the citizens' committee has gone wrong (if it has), and the superintendent cannot be cowed by the committee. Advisory committees, of course, can use substantial amounts of administrative time. This puts the superintendent in a bind as he or she tries to mesh priorities with the priorities as perceived by the advisory committee. It's important that the relationship between the advisory committee and the rest of the staff be defined properly. Otherwise the superintendent will find himself or herself essentially a clerk to the school board; and the advisory committee chairperson, especially if he or she is a strong person, will dominate staff to such an extent that the superintendent is strangled from a power base situation. The superintendent and the staff need clear lines of responsibility to the school board. Of course there's always the danger of special interest groups taking over. Where advisory committees are concerned, it's essential to get a good mix of the citizens within the community.

One of the non-problems that you sometimes hear about is the turnover in superintendents. This turnover is often interpreted to mean that the relationship between school administrators and their school boards is eroding, but I don't think that's true at all. As a matter of fact, I think that board/administrator relationships are the subject of considerable misinterpretation. The 1977 needs

assessment of the American Association of School Administrators shows, in the 96 percent of the districts responding, that the relationships between the boards and the superintendents are indeed good. The average tenure of all superintendents is seven years; for urban superintendents, it's forty-nine months. I think this rebuts the misconception that these relationships are bad. In fact, 76 percent of the superintendents who left their jobs in 1977 left of their own accord for reasons of self-improvement. Keep in mind that there are only 750 school districts in the United States that have more than 10,000 enrollment. Every time a position in one of the larger school districts opens up, half a dozen superintendents from smaller districts vie for that job. When the superintendent of the middle or larger size district leaves, there are a number of people vying for that job, and that opens up other jobs down the line. I wanted to rebut that notion that the turnover rate in superintendents always and in every instance is due to bad feelings between the administration and the school board. I think it's something that you often hear of, and it's the subject of considerable misinformation, but there are usually valid, appropriate reasons for the changes in staff that occur.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Thomas Shannon

Question: Often there is concern that school boards are just puppets of superintendents. What do you think about this?

The question basically resolves itself down to the old rubber stamp issue. I don't think that's the case today; and in those areas where this kind of claim could be made, I think it is decreasingly true. I think there is a new breed of school board member who has developed out of the turmoil of the sixties with its substantial change in attitudes about education and the importance of education. This, I think, is mirrored in the makeup of school board members themselves.

The National School Boards Association did a survey some twenty years ago on the profile of the average school board member. At that time school board members invariably were white Protestant business people with Republican party affiliations and most of them were well over forty-five years of age. Well, that has completely turned around today. The profile of a school board member much more reflects society as a whole. Where you have good relationships between the superintendent and the board, many things are thrashed out in advance. Very few superintendents will bring to their school boards things that they think don't have a reasonable chance of succeeding —proposals that they don't think the school board will approve. It's a very subtle kind of thing because the superintendent knows the school board members. Now, when the philosophy of the board members and the superintendent do not agree, then something has to go—either the school board members are recalled, or the superintendent resigns or is dismissed. Today, I think activists —vigorous advocates of education—are the rule rather than the exception. And I think that's substantially different from what it was in previous decades.

Question: What is your organization doing to help school boards come up with new ideas on conserving energy?

In the area of energy, we have established a task force which will present a rather extensive study of energy needs. Incidentally, the American Association of School Administrators has done a great deal on this effort, and we cooperated with them on this with some specific recommendations on how we can address ourselves to the energy problem. Certainly one of the solutions under consideration is changing the school year. This has been tried throughout the United States and has been met with mixed reviews. As far as changing the calendar itself is concerned, there has to be a change throughout the school system. You can't just change the elementary schools, the junior high schools, or the senior high schools. You have to change all of them across the board, but there is going to have to be a revision in societal thinking about that as well. When you have the idea that summer is the time to take vacation, and that's when the mothers and the fathers will be taking their vacations, you get a lot of resistance to the idea of year-round schools. Those of us who have worked in the year-round school situation know what a devisive element it can become in communities. This, of course, is one of the primary reasons why we have lay governance of education. There are lots of things that in China, for example, can be jammed down people's throats; but you just don't jam

those things down people's throats here in the United States. It takes broad-based community leadership, and certainly school boards are part of it. We *do* have a responsibility, and we think that our responsibilities will be enhanced by the results of this task force when that report is out.

Question: What kind of education program does the National School Boards Association have for its school board members?

It's a multi-faceted kind of program based primarily on publications. I'm the publisher of a magazine called "American School Board Journal," which has a readership of 150,000—primarily school board members, school superintendents, and other administrators. There are 95,000 school board members sitting in 16,000 school boards in the United States. We are also in the process now of starting publication of a new magazine called the "Executive Educator." These two magazines come out on a monthly basis. We have established a new newsletter, and we also publish a magazine called "School Board," which is more of an advocate's kind of magazine than "American School Board Journal" or certainly the "Executive Educator." The "Executive Educator" is aimed at the school superintendent who has the important job of implementing the school board's decisions. We also have the School Board Academy, which goes throughout the United States on a program basis similar to NASE, and the National Association of School Executives, run and administered by the American Association of School Administrators. I used to be legal counsel of AASA, and that is why I'm very familiar with AASA's programs. We also have, of course, our annual convention which is the largest educational convention in the world. We had over 22,000 people in attendance last April. We publish many special kinds of reports on an ongoing basis, and we just completed a movie on career education, primarily for board members. It goes through a mock school board meeting and shows school board members and the superintendent interacting on the issue of career education. We did this on a $125,000 grant from the federal government. All the issues and aspects of career education are articulated in this film which should be a big help for school board members. These are just a few examples of our many publications and projects. We feel that one of our very important jobs is education because of the startling statistic that about a quarter of our school board members throughout the United States are replaced every year. As my good friend Paul Salmon of the AASA says, "When you talk to school board members, you don't have an audience, you have a parade." They are like other local government officials—their turn-over rate is so rapid. We've got to keep this in mind in designing our educational program.

Question: Do you see career education as an integral part of all curricula?

I hope you get a chance to see our film on this topic. It's going to be shown all over the United States and will be seen by thousands upon tens of thousands of school board members. The whole point of the film is that career education is not an "add on" course—it's an integral part of the entire curriculum. School board members are very enthusiastic about career education and vocational education. They're the best friends you have in public education. Career education is something they understand; it's something that's very close to them. It's productive; it's something that yields immediate kinds of benefits. But we've got a lot of educating to do, not only with school board members, but with everybody. People have to understand that in today's society you do not take a youngster and send him or her to vocational school in the ninth grade and expect him or her to be able to compete. Much better skills than that in the basic core subjects are needed. That's why in order to compete even on a vocational level, it's important to make career education an integral part of the curriculum.

Question: Can you suggest ways that researchers can better communicate with school board members?

I can think of nothing better than to write clearly and speak plainly. That's the first thing. I can't say good writing is one of the great virtues of people in our profession of education. But this could be improved through special kinds of writing courses, through critiques, through employing somebody, for example, to take a look at your reports and see what you can do. Napoleon had a person like this. His name was Major Jones. His main function was to read and edit everything that went out. Now Major Jones was a real dummy, and didn't fit in at all well with the very sophisticated general staff of Napoleon. Some of the generals became jealous, and they asked him, "Why does this Major Jones have all this influence with you, Nap?" And Napoleon said, "If Major Jones can understand these field orders, then I know that every corporal in the field can understand them." What I think you need around here is a Major Jones. Sometimes I think my own shop needs a Major Jones, but one of the things you could do, just for the fun of it, is to take some of your publications, hand them over to an English teacher, and see what that English teacher would say. I'm telling you this as a school administrator with fifteen years of experience as a law professor and as an attorney. You can't do anything better than to focus on clear, concise communication. The second thing would be to have your Center produce a program for our school board members to participate in at their annual convention. You may not take this idea seriously, but anybody here who's been at a convention knows that people really attend those kinds of programs. They have a lot of fun, too, and they attend those clinics as well as the general sessions. We could have joint presentations at our school board academy. Your staff could attend some of our presentations and activities. We could work on many joint activities.

Question: Being a school board member, especially in large metropolitan areas, is almost a full-time job. How can the vigor and cross-sectional makeup be maintained?

It's a political problem. It's a problem that is very much like the problem of how do you insure that the best people go to Washington? How do you insure that the best people go to your state capital? How do you get the best people to sit on the city council? In my judgment, it's a problem that should be of fundamental concern to citizen groups—the Chamber of Commerce, the League of Women Voters, the Urban League, the NAACP, the Chicano Federation, and other such groups. They ought to be very concerned about that, and they ought to do something about it. We're attempting to instill this sort of attitude regarding citizen leadership in local communities throughout America. And that's one of the reasons why you have this parade of school board members, why you have so many board members going off. They just get tired of receiving not only the normal kinds of calls from citizens, but also the nonsense that often is the by-product of turbulent collective negotiations efforts—where you have your whole front yard littered with garbage, for example, and where, if you vote for an integration measure, you have burning crosses on your front yard, and things like that. There is a limit. It goes back to Harry Truman's saying about the heat in the kitchen. You know that old one better than I do, I'm sure. But it's a real problem, and it's a problem that faces all of us throughout the United States in our local communities. How do you get the best people out to run? And when we *do* have good people in, we've got to support them.

Question: What are the school boards doing to maximize the effectiveness of occupational education?

At the present time, I think school boards are endeavoring to understand the whole concept better. That's one of the reasons why we were able to persuade the U.S. government that we needed this movie as a training aid for school board members. There's a lot of confusion. In fact, there's confusion among the professionals in the field about what occupational education is and what career education is and how you relate the two. We have published several reports on this, and we've also published some surveys on the whole issue of career education. Of course, the school board members sitting on their local school boards work with their superintendents in the development of particular plans. Polls that we take on a regular basis show that this is a field that is of particular interest to school board members at this time. My hope is that we can do a whole lot more in this field.

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